

Touring Nürnberg

by Streetcar – Token



James T. Martin

NI# 2657

www.Moneta-Coins.com

Nürnberg, or Nuremberg, is the second largest city in the state of Bavaria. This southern German city was first mentioned in 1050 in official records as Noremberg. It had its origin in a castle (now known as Kaiserburg), built about 10 years earlier by the German king Henry III, duke of Bavaria who became Holy Roman emperor in 1046. A settlement developed around the castle, and in 1219 the city was granted its first charter. The city soon gained full independence, becoming a free Imperial City in Germany.



Heraldic Crest of Nürnberg

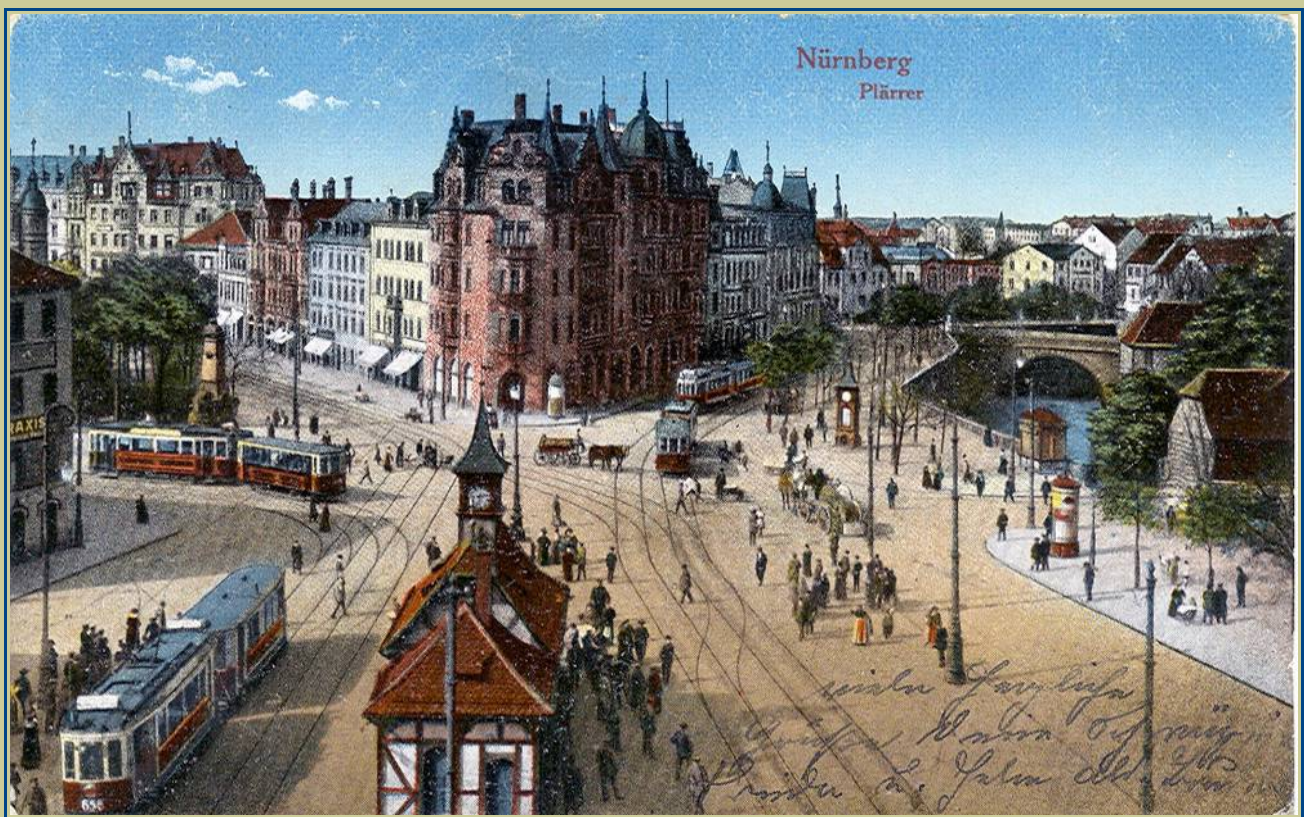


Nürnberg in Bavaria



A wonderful series of Nürnberg - Fürth Strassenbahn (Streetcar) tokens were issued during the Weimar Republic, following the Great War. While they can be classified as transportation tokens they are commonly attributed as German notgeld (emergency money). Notgeld was used during the inflationary period brought on by reparations payments stipulated by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles after WWI.

Forty-five separate designs were issued for the reverse motif, while the obverse design is static, and illustrated on the title page. The noteworthy aspect of the reverse designs is that they depict picturesque places, objects of art, and famous people of Nürnberg. These octagonal tokens are made of aluminum and are twenty-five millimeters across. The twenty pfennig tokens are undated but are known to have been issued in 1920 with a mintage of ten thousand for each design. So climb aboard and let's tour the Nürnberg area by way of their Strassenbahn tokens, it only costs 20 pfg.



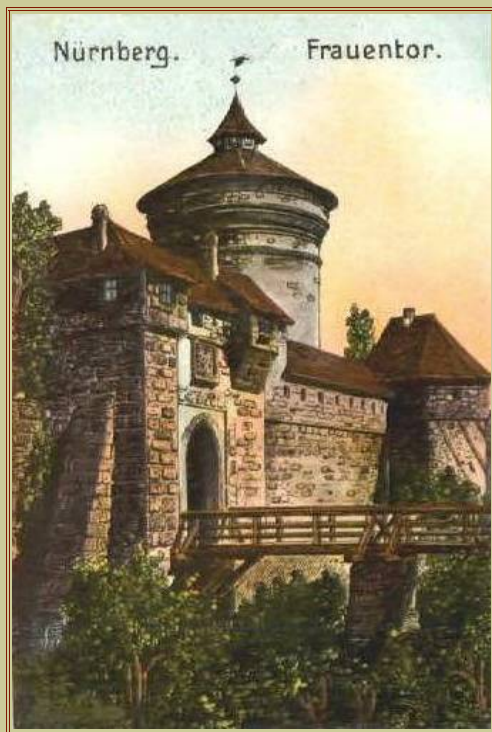
Postcard of Plärrer station, the central hub of the Nürnberg - Fürth Strassenbahn line. While plans for a streetcar line began in 1864, a horse-drawn system was not in place until 1881. By 1896 an electric system was established and fully operational by 1898.

First Stop - The Gates of Nürnberg

As any first rate medieval city, Nürnberg was surrounded by a wall and a moat. Nürnberg had a five kilometer wall surrounding the city with several gates (tor) allowing access to the city from all sides. The city wall was built between the 12th and 16th centuries. The wall also had to allow the Pegnitz river to flow into and out of the city. The Nürnberg-Fürth Strassenbahn token series celebrated four of these historic gates.



The Frauentor, with the Frauenturm (tower) behind, is the main gate facing the southeast towards Regensburg. The term "Frau" refers to the Holy Mother and the relationship to the St. Clare Monastery of the Poor.



It's almost as if the Frauentor token was fashioned after this postcard of the period.



The Spittler Tor and tower, below, is the main gate facing southwest. The gate's name derives from the *Elizabeth Hospital* built by the Teutonic Knights. ▼



The Spittler Tor and Turm
from a painting of 1856. ►

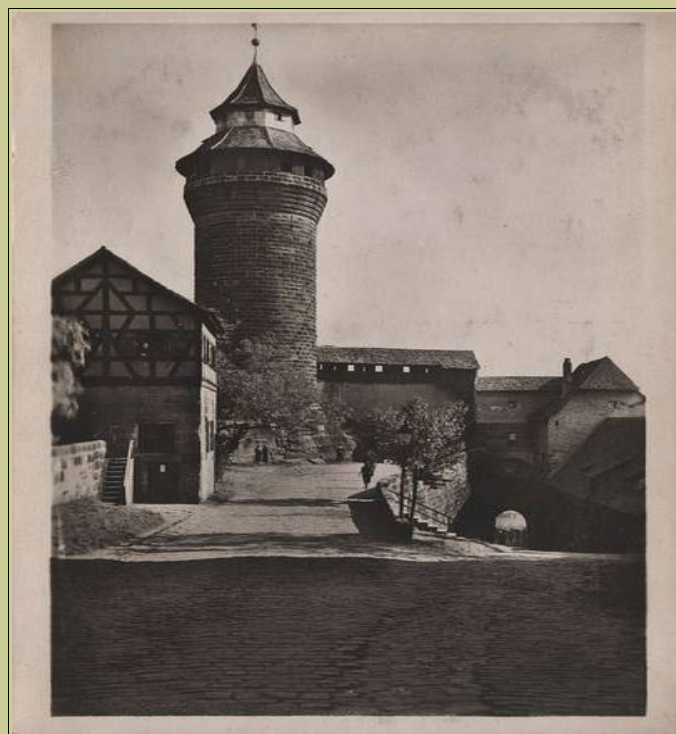


The Tiergärtnerertor points to
where the medieval zoo was
located. Tiergarten refers to
an “animal garden” or zoo.
There's a related token, later
in the tour, that celebrates
polar bears in the zoo. ▼





Vestnertor gate, tower, and customs house was at the northern main entrance to Nürnberg. This area of the city is associated with the Viscount Castle. Below, inside wall postcard photo of tower and gate.



The Fountains of Nürnberg

The Nürnberg – Fürth Strassenbahn tokens also feature seven fountains found throughout this water-rich city.



Kunst, or Centaur Fountain as it is known today, in Fürth.





The **Neptune Fountain** in the main square of Nürnberg. Recent photos show that this fountain has been relocated to a city park. Below, as it appeared in a 1905.





**The Schöner Brunnen,
or Beautiful Fountain,**
is extremely intricate and
colorful.

The token and postcard do not
do it justice as it is seen today,
completely restored.

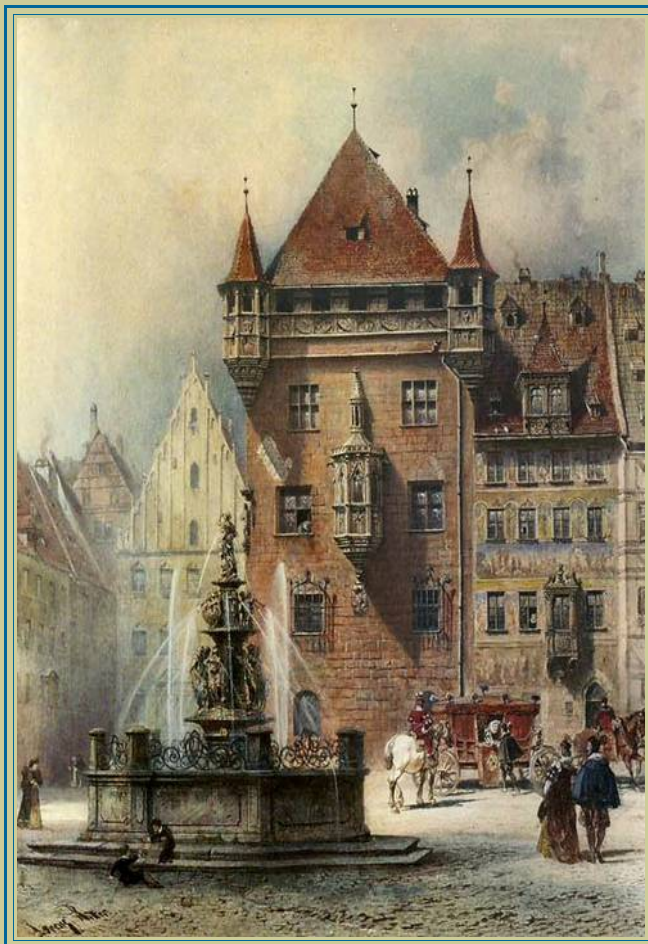
It can also be seen in the
background of the old
postcard shown above.
It was constructed between
1389 and 1396 by the
builder and stonemason,
Heinrich Beheim.





The Fountain of the Virtues

This bronze fountain, built by Benedikt Wurselbauer between 1584 – 1589, has been the subject of much study until recent times. The personifications and symbols do not follow the expected Christian canon of virtues. Further study and understanding has revealed hidden meaning that brings the fountain closer to the traditional canon of virtues.



The fountain, with the Nassauer House behind, in the Lorenzer Platz. The virtues and personifications depicted on the fountain are: Maternal Love, Hope, Strength, Bravery, Wisdom, Moderation, Patience, Justice, and Vigilance.



“WASSERSPEIER” means water spout, the fountain remains a mystery, I could not find any current or historical information on this fountain. Perhaps it was destroyed in the Second World War or maybe the name has been changed.



“GÄNSE - MÄNNCHEN”
Behind the Frauenkirche you'll find this little fountain, by P. Labenwolf. It depicts a country gentleman carrying two geese artfully squirting water from their bills. This old postcard shows the bronze statue in a stone-cut basin. This fountain was created in the early 16th century. See the token below...





GÄNSE-MÄNNCHEN



Tiefer Brunnen or Deep Well



This “deep well” is a part of the Imperial Castle, or Burg, and probably dates to the construction of the original castle. Its purpose was to provide water during a siege. The well is two meters in diameter and fifty-three meters deep, reaching to the water table of the Pegnitz river.



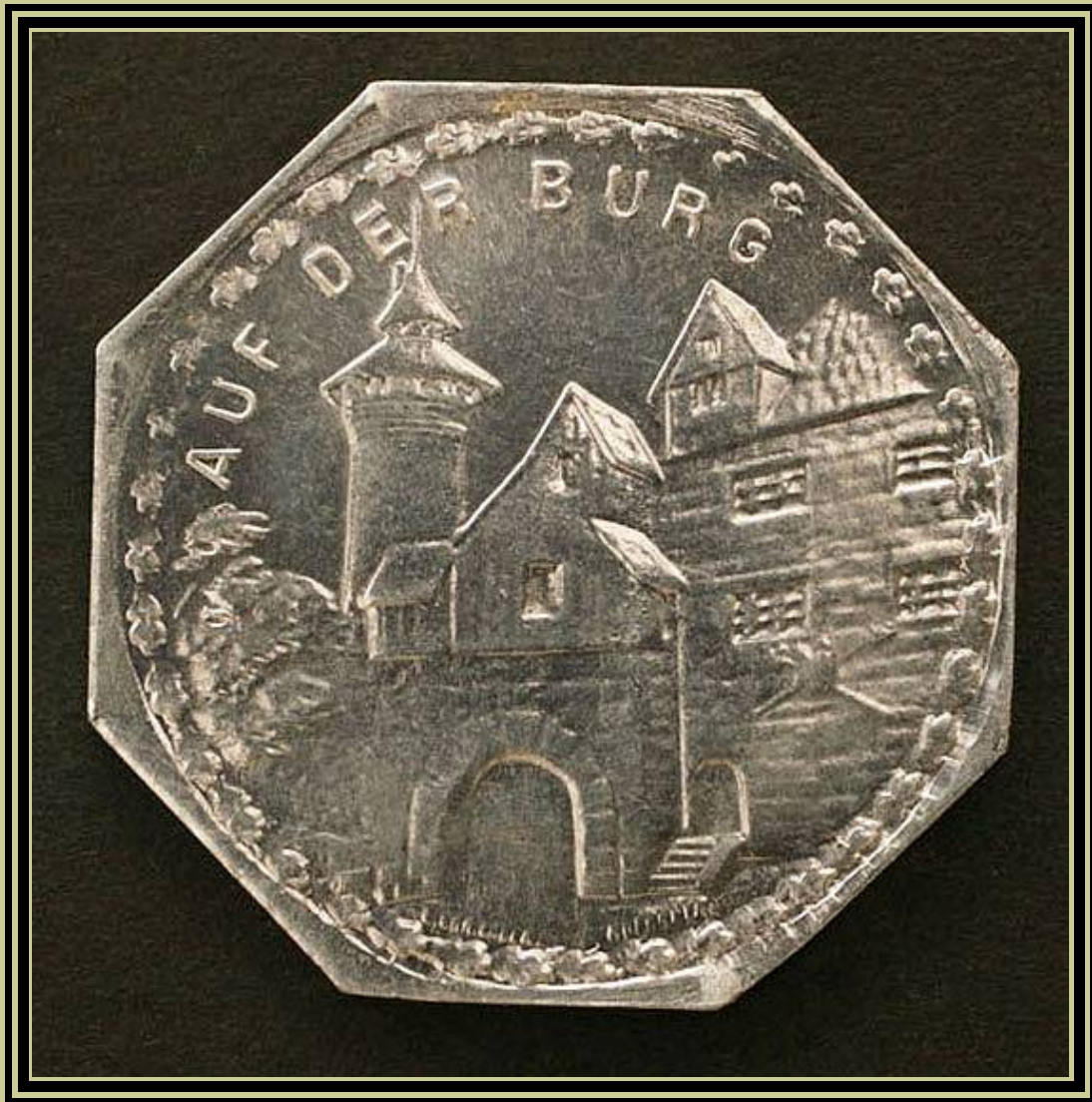
The Kaiserburg in Nürnberg

Like most burs (castles) in Europe, Kaiserburg is built on a berg, or hilltop. As mentioned previously, this Imperial castle was begun around 1040 A.D. by Henry III, Duke of Bavaria and it became one of the major castles of medieval Europe. Besides the deep well there are three main buildings in this large complex, the Kaiserburg, some buildings of the Burgraves of Nürnberg, and those for municipal administration.



Kaiserburg Imperial Castle - main building. Three Strassenbahn tokens depict scenes from the complex, the Tiefer Brunnen, this Burg token, and "Auf der Burg", another close-up scene from atop the hill.

"Auf Der Burg"



Other points of interest depicted on the Strassenbahn tokens of Nürnberg

The following are a more diverse group of scenes consisting of towers, buildings, bridges, museums, and artifacts. We'll end this part of the tour with a well deserved rest stop.



**Fünfeckiger Turm
or
The Quintagonal
Tower**

refers to five corners or sides. The obvious question is the fact that the tower appears to have four corners.

Below, a postcard from about 1904 showing a staircase that allows entrance to the tower a good distance from ground level.

It is the oldest surviving structure in Nürnberg.





The Karlsbrücke or Charles Bridge is dedicated to Emperor Charles VI who had a dilapidated wooden bridge replaced by this sandstone structure in 1728.



Below, a print of the new bridge in 1728.





Heiliggeist Spital or Holy Spirit Hospital

The hospital was built between 1332 and 1339, a chapel was added in 1420. Additions and renovations were carried out between 1489 and 1527. Further renovations were accomplished during the Third Reich but allied bombing totally destroyed the complex. Fortunately, this historic hospital was completely rebuilt on the original plan between 1951 - 53.



Heiliggeist Spital on a postcard of 1900, before Nazi renovations, destruction and rebuilding. The original entrance fee was to pray for the soul of the benefactor, repeatedly.



Henkersteg or Hangmans Bridge

This covered bridge was built in 1457. It was totally destroyed by flood and ice jam in 1595 with the loss of eight lives. It was rebuilt and upgraded between 1657 and 1776. Sustaining heavy damage during World War II, it was rebuilt in 1954. The bridge was included in the 950th Year Anniversary of Nürnberg in 2000.





Luginsland

Luginsland Tower was completed in five months during 1377 while the neighboring viscount was away. It was built in order to better observe the Viscount's activities upon his return. The viscount appealed to the Emperor to have it torn down. When that was refused a violent battle ensued. It has since been used as a prison tower.



Before it became known as Luginsland it was known as St. John's Lodge. It is still home to an active Masonic Lodge.

A postcard of the period depicts a similar view as the token. Two other towers are seen on the Luginsland token, each having their own dedicated Strassenbahn token.



The Weisser Turm or White Tower with Gate

The White Tower and gate were built in 1250 and were part of the original wall of the city of Nuremberg. It is closely associated with the Elizabeth Hospital. It incorporates a old toll gate, a debtors prison, and two ancient clock systems. The tower was covered in white plaster until renovations in the postwar period.



Saint Elizabeth's and St. James's Church

St. Elizabeth's was originally a Gothic chapel of the German Knight's Order but it was destroyed in 1785. The neo-classical replacement, with huge copper dome, was heavily damaged in WWII and finally rebuilt by 1975. It is famous for large statues of the twelve apostles. The Gothic Franconian style is seen in St. James's (Jakob) Church, built in the late 14th century.



This old photo encompasses the theme of this token perfectly. Seen are both churches, the Weisser Turm in the background, a streetcar, and tracks are also seen!



1st German Railway Nürnberg - Fürth

While plans for passenger and freight rail lines preceded the Bavarian Ludwig Railway, the Nürnberg - Fürth line is the first successful line in Germany. Operations began in 1835. The "Adler" or "Eagle" steam locomotive engine was built by Stevenson's Co. from Newcastle, England. The token depicts opening day ceremonies.



While the "Adler" locomotive was rebuilt for the 100th Anniversary (1935), it was severely damaged in a 2005 fire. It was restored to operation again by 2008 at a cost of one million Euros and is seen here on its maiden voyage.

Eppelein Sprung

Eppelein von Gailingen was a famous robber baron who began his life of crime in 1360. His *modus opperandi* was to hold up merchant wagons operating out of Nürnberg. Indited in 1369, he was not caught until his castle fortress was destroyed in 1372. Sentenced to hanging in the "Burg," he was granted his last request, which was to sit upon his trusty steed, one last time.



Eppelein von Gailingen took the opportunity to break free and guide his horse to the wall of a bridge crossing the city moat. The famous leap into the moat allowed him live until 1381, when he was caught again, and executed on the breaking wheel.

**Tiergarten Eisbären
or
Zoo Polar Bears**

The only traces of a zoo, mentioned in the middle ages, is the Tiergartenertor and plaza. The modern zoo was established in 1912 but that gave way for a Third Reich Rally field.

The new zoo is a first-class animal park.

Along with the polar bears it also has a dolphin aquarium and many other attractions.



**Germanisches Museum
or the
German National Museum**

This German cultural museum was established in 1857 by a group of individuals led by Franconian Baron, Hans von and zu Aufsess.

Now located in completely new buildings, it is still Germany's largest cultural museum.

It is the place to go to see the subject of our next streetcar token - the famous Madonna of Nürnberg and other notable works by artists of Nürnberg.



Nürnberger Madonna

While it is not clear who the artist is for this wooden sculpture, it is likely to be Peter Vischer the Younger (1487 - 1528), a member of a family of artists founded by Hermann Vischer the Elder. A distinguishing feature of this religious sculpture is the unusual configuration of the praying hands. They represent a medieval style of praying that is rarely depicted. They can be seen here in contrast to the traditional "Praying Hands" style of Albrecht Dürer.





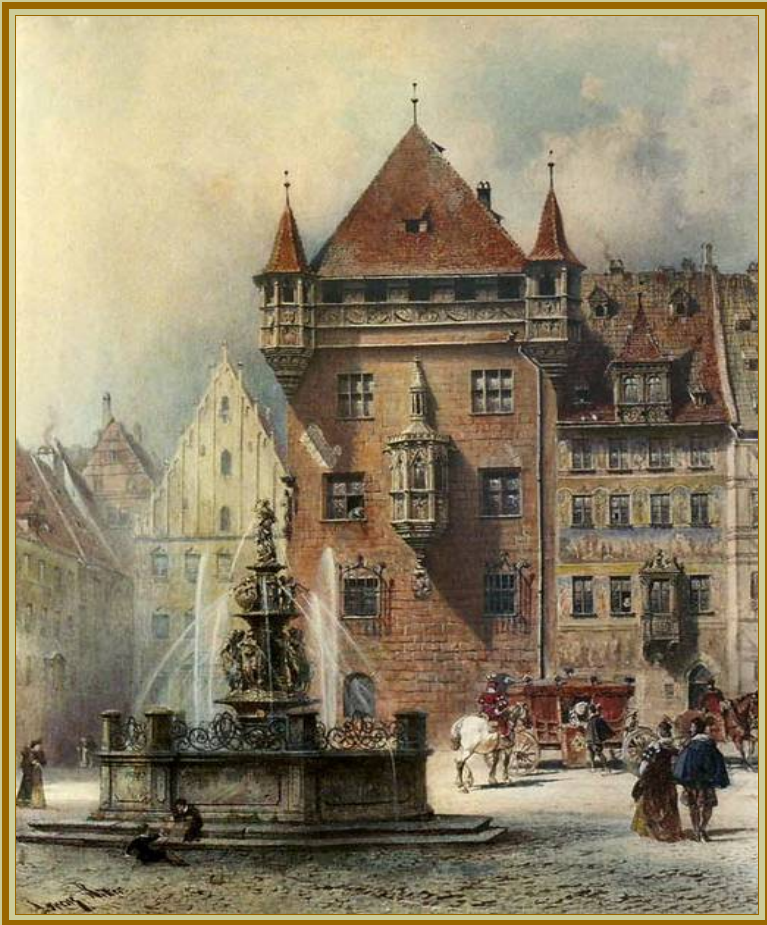
Albrecht Dürer

Albrecht Dürer established himself as the premier artist of the Northern Renaissance (1471 – 1528). As an artist he excelled in painting, both oils and watercolors, as an engraver, and as a print maker from his high quality woodcuts.

He was also a mathematical theorist who specialized in perspective and the principles of ideal proportions. His series of woodcuts retain a Gothic flavor while his watercolors have established him as one of Europe's earliest landscape artists.

His self-portrait is shown here with its distinctive monogram. Below, his token, and that of his home from 1509 to his death in 1528 – it still stands today.





Nassauer Haus

The Nassauer House is the oldest residence of Nürnberg and was built in the early 13th Century.

In 1254 one of the kaisers functionaries lived here and the kaiser himself once visited. The top turreted portion of the house was added after initial construction.

This old picture shows the house behind the Fountain of Virtues. After serving as a residence it became an inn, and is believed to be among the oldest surviving inns in Germany. Now it hosts a famous restaurant and wine cellar.



Peller Haus

This was one of the most outstanding domestic Renaissance buildings in Northern and Central Europe. Designed by Jacob Wolf the Elder it was built by Viatis Bartholomew for his son Martin Peller. This magnificent building had a beautiful courtyard.

Unfortunately, like 90% of Nürnberg, it was destroyed in World War II. The ground floor of the courtyard survived and was incorporated into a new building in the 1950s. The famous courtyard has been reconstructed.



Toppler Haus

I was not able to find out much about this structure during my research. In the 1890's it was touted as Nürnberg's oldest printing and art print establishment. Its original purpose and age are unknown. The lack of information can only mean it was totally destroyed in the War and not rebuilt. An old photo shows it to be an unusual and architecturally beautiful building.



The Rathauses

A Rathaus is a town or city hall in Germany. In other words, the administrative center of town. The Nürnberg-Fürth Strassenbahn Emergency money (Notgeld) series has three tokens dedicated to the Rathaus. An Old and New Rathaus are depicted for Nürnberg. Below, the Neues Rathaus of Nürnberg on the left and Rathaus in Fürth on the right.



Rathaus

The Old Rathaus was built between the 14th and 17th centuries. The design was by Jakob Wolff the Younger and is modelled on an Italian pallazzo design.



Below, the Neues Rathaus of Nürnberg on the left and Rathaus in Fürth on the right.





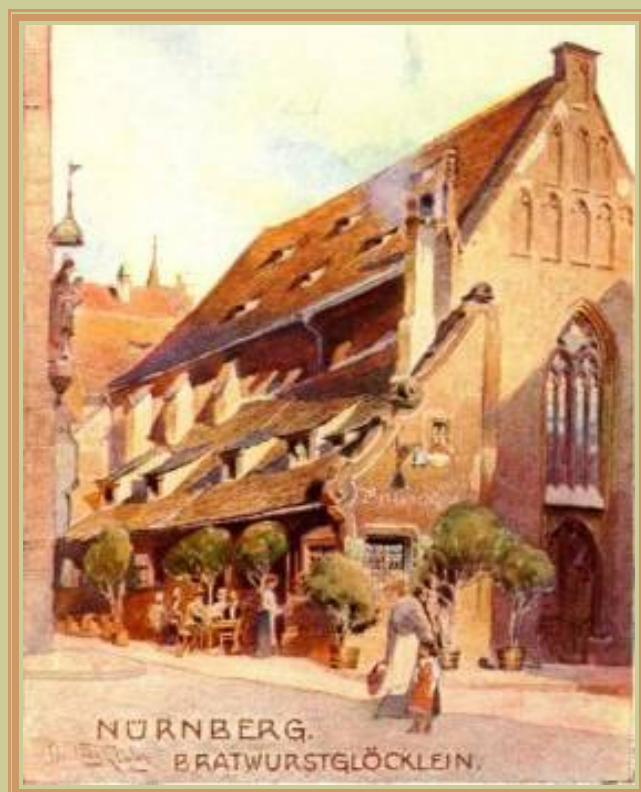
Bratwurstglöcklein

“Nürnbergers” are the famous bratwursts of Germany. These bratwursts are a bit thinner and shorter than those found elsewhere. The Bratwurstglöcklein was first mentioned in 1313 so they've had plenty of time to perfect their famous sausage. The bratwurst are made fresh daily and only from the finest local ingredients. The bell was used to announce when the fresh sausages were ready for purchase. All the personalities that follow on the Strassenbahn notgeld would have eaten here.



▲ A fine meal, and I guarantee you that the taste cannot be duplicated anywhere. Don't forget the premium German mustard and the delicious brötchen. You'll want to accompany that with a local beer!

An old postcard depicts the Bratwurstglöcklein, which is hard up against the Moritz Chapel. ►





Weinstadel

The Weinstadel, located along the Pegnitz river, was built between 1446 - 1448. Its original purpose was for the treatment and shelter of lepers. When they were banned from the city it became a wine storage facility and a home for the poor. It's two storied, half-timbered design retains its medieval look. Today, with modernized interior, it serves as a student residence.



An 1875 view, by German painter Albin Mattenheimer, of the Weinstadel and Henkersteg.

Städt. Sparkasse, or City Savings Bank

Established in old Augustinian Monastery in 1821, the savings bank was the first one in Bavaria. The original charter was to encourage thrift among the poor and children, and only they were allowed to open accounts. With the industrial revolution, and Nürnberg becoming the industrial center of Bavaria, everyone was allowed to open accounts by 1876. The 20th Century brought innovations that proved the invaluable services provided by the Stadtsparkasse system. In 1900 the first electric calculating machines were used, in 1908 the telephone was introduced, and in 1912 the use of checks had begun, all sparking a new age in banking.

Reparations payments following the Great War (WW I) began in June 1921, and that had an immediate and disastrous effect on the economy and monetary system. By November 1923, the American dollar was worth 4,210,500,000,000 German Reichsmarks (4.2 trillion)! The value of 200,000 accounts dropped to near zero. The situation was finally stabilized with the introduction of the Rentenmark monetary system that was backed by bonds indexed to market prices for gold. Thus ended the furious printing of worthless paper money. The inflationary paper marks were gathered and sold, by the ton, to paper recyclers.

The whole episode, while still controversial, is said to have been a major factor in Adolf Hitler's rise to power and the Third Reich's march toward World War Two. Huge Nazi Party rallies were held in the Nürnberg stadium, and following the war, the Nürnberg Trials for Nazi war criminals were held in the city as well.



The Städt. Sparkasse Strassenbahn notgeld token is the only token collected with known die varieties. There are four types, this one being the one with clouds. Another has no clouds. A third type has a thinner "20" on the obverse, while the fourth is described as having a different "position of point above A" (R. Upton). The meaning of which is unclear but probably relates to the 'umlaut' in STÄDT. Therefore, a truly complete set of Strassenbahn notgeld would consist of 48 examples, rather than just 45.

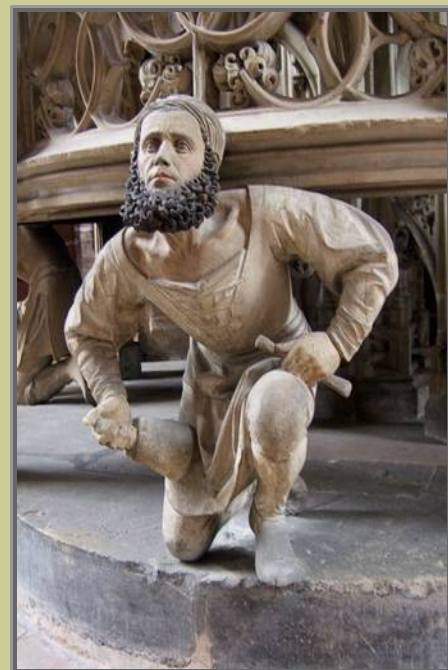
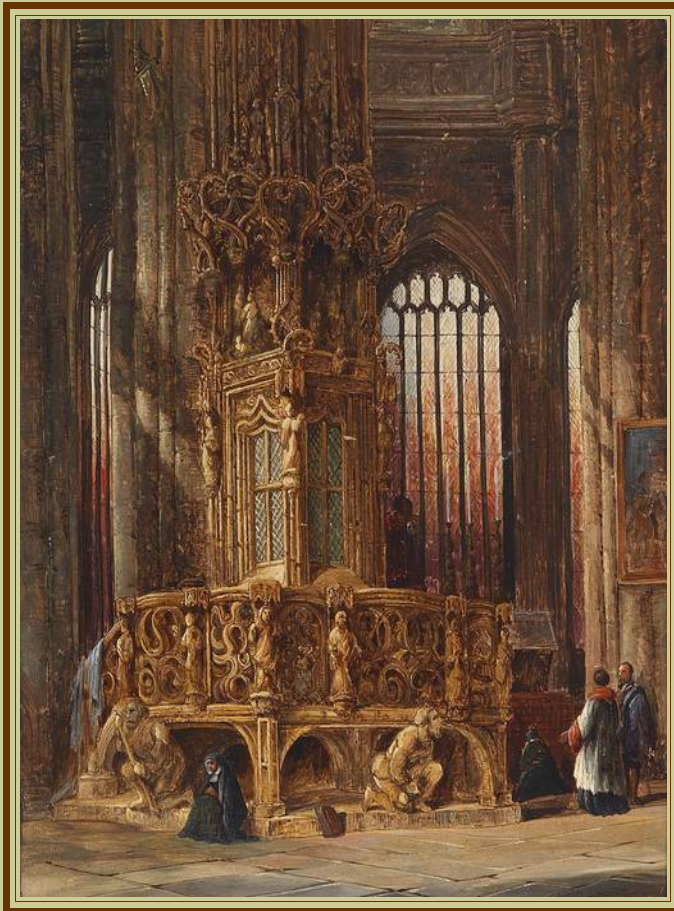
Notable Personalities on the Strassenbahn Notgeld Tokens of Nürnberg



There are nine men celebrated on this series of strassenbahn tokens. The best known, and internationally famous artist, Albrecht Dürer, and von Epplein have been presented earlier.



Adam Kraft was a master sculptor and builder in the late Gothic period. He is confirmed have settled in Nüremberg by 1490, after having been an assistant on the carving of the pulpit of the Strasbourg Cathedral, completed in 1485. His masterpiece is considered to be the tabernacle in the St. Lorenz church in in Nüremberg. This sixty-one foot tall stone strucure, in the shape of a gothic tower, reaches up to the vaulted cealing. To ensure his continued fame he included a sculpture of himself as the central figure of the tabernacle.



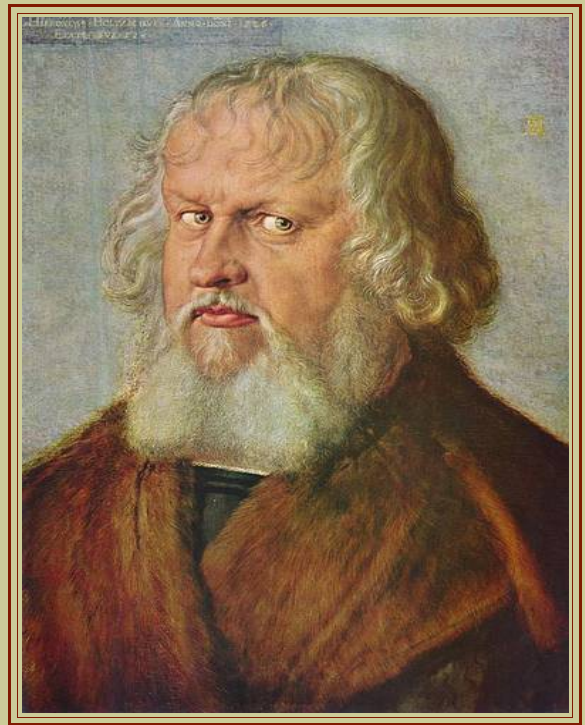
Hans Sachs was born in Nürnberg and attended a singing program at his local church, awakening in him a talent for poetry and song. At age 14 he apprenticed as a shoemaker and achieved journeyman by age 17 whereupon he traveled Germany practicing his craft and art. By 1517 he was discovered by Emperor Maximilian I of Austria and invited to the palace as a *meistersinger*. His greatest intellectual achievements were inspired by the coming of the Reformation, which he embraced early and with enthusiasm. He wrote a poem which began with "The nightingale of Wittemberg, which is heard everywhere," and other works of prose praising Martin Luther, for which he became famous.



Martin Behaim is possibly the most interesting person in the Strassenbahn series. Unfortunately, records are incomplete, so his true influence on world exploration and geographic mapping is not definitively known. One thing is certain, Martin Behaim created the first globe before Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage. This globe accurately depicts the St. Lawrence seaway in Canada. He is also credited with providing the map, used by Magellan, to find what came to known as the Strait of Magellan, the gateway to the Pacific by way of sailing west. Martin Behaim was in the employ of King John II of Portugal during the age of exploration for his ability to provide maps.



Where did he get them? That's the mystery! He had previously lived in northern Europe and had traveled extensively. He was acquainted with Columbus and Magellan, as well as other explorers of the era and had traveled as far south as the country of Benin on Africa's west coast. Columbus had not traveled blindly and the map of St. Lawrence proves Martin Behaim had uncommon knowledge of the new world. The Vinland map, while still debated today, also tends to prove that the Northmen are responsible for maps of the New World. Magellan and Columbus owe a great deal to Martin Behaim and his maps.



Hieronimus Holzschuer was a patrician on the inner council of the Imperial City of Nürnberg. He eventually rose to the position of Supreme Captain. The Holzschuer line is one of the oldest patrician families of Nürnberg and they served on the council, with few breaks, from 1228 to 1806. In 1806 the council was dissolved, along with the end of Imperial City status, due to the invasion of Napoleon, and annexation by Bavaria. His only claim to fame is the portrait of him done by Albrecht Dürer, painted in 1526.



Wenzel Jamnitzer (1507-1585) was the best known German goldsmith of his era and served a succession of Holy Roman Emperors as court goldsmith. He was also known as an artist and print maker through the craft of etching. A creation of his, below:





Peter Henlein (1485 – 1542) is generally considered to be the inventor of the pocket watch. These were actually “clock-watches,” the first portable clocks. Too big to worn on the wrist, they were usually worn as a pendant or attached to clothing. Henlein, however, did not invent the mainspring, so accuracy was compromised. His was a major technological development and it wasn't long before the mainspring was miniaturized for use in smaller time pieces.



Peter Vischer the Elder (1455-1529) is the most famous of a family of artisans of Nürnberg. He was a metal sculptor who's work was highly prized and can be seen in churches and cathedrals throughout Germany. He was called upon to create shrines, tombstones and epitaphs. The epitome of his work is the Shrine of St. Sebald in the St. Sebaldus church in Nürnberg.

Antique Streetcar of the Nürnberg – Fürth Strassenbahn Notgeld Era ~ 1920



Sources:

- 1) Token photos: authors collection and <http://hermes-ir.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/da/handle/123456789/7>
- 2) Postcards & paintings: Wikimedia Commons (USA and Germany)
- 3) Notgeld Information: Upton, Richard; "Emergency Coins of Germany – Metal and Porcelain"
1970 - Numismatics International (reprint 1999) & Emergency Money Society
- 4) Subject background: Wikipedia (USA and Germany)

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